

---

---

# Digital Marketing Strategies Adoption and the Possibility of Enhancing Sales of the Small Businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States, Nigeria

<sup>1</sup>Koце Henry Diko (PhD), <sup>2</sup>Bello Babatunde Sikiru & <sup>3</sup>Koце Adayilo Kenneth

<sup>1&2</sup>Department of Marketing, Federal Polytechnic, Bida, Niger State, Nigeria

<sup>3</sup>Department of Computer Science, Federal Polytechnic, Bida, Niger State, Nigeria

E-mail: <sup>1</sup>henkoce@yahoo.com

## ABSTRACT

Digital marketing adoption is increasingly recognized as a key driver of business performance within Nigeria's evolving commercial environment, particularly for small businesses seeking improved sales growth and customer engagement across markets. Despite growing interest, evidence from less urbanized States remains limited, creating the need for context-specific empirical investigation. This study therefore aims to examine the effect of digital marketing strategies adoption on the enhancement of sales among small businesses operating in Kwara and Nasarawa States, Nigeria, with specific attention to search engine marketing and email marketing practices. A descriptive survey research design was adopted to systematically collect quantitative data from small business owners across selected commercial towns. Using multistage sampling and Taro Yamane's formula, 400 respondents were surveyed through a validated questionnaire, while correlation and multiple regression analyses were employed to test hypothesized relationships. The findings reveal that search engine marketing adoption has a significant positive effect on market expansion, explaining 70.1 percent of its variation. Email marketing adoption also significantly influences customer acquisition and retention, accounting for 77.3 percent of the observed variation, highlighting its strategic value. The study concludes that effective adoption of digital marketing strategies enhances sales possibilities by improving market reach, competitiveness, customer engagement, and relationship management among small businesses in the study area. Based on these findings, it is recommended that small business owners invest in affordable paid search campaigns, develop search engine optimization skills, and implement email marketing practices focused on customer response tracking and message personalization for growth.

**Keywords:** Digital marketing adoption; Email marketing; Sales enhancement; Search engine marketing; Small businesses

### Journal Reference Format:

Koце Henry Diko, Bello Babatunde Sikiru & Koце Adayilo Kenneth (2025): Digital Marketing Strategies Adoption and the Possibility of Enhancing Sales of the Small Businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States, Nigeria. Social Informatics, Business, Politics, Law, Environmental Sciences & Technology Journal. Vol. 11, No. 3. Pp 19-34.  
[www.isteams/socialinformaticsjournal](http://www.isteams/socialinformaticsjournal).

---

---

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Digital marketing adoption is increasingly recognized as a key driver of business performance in the contemporary Nigerian business environment. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have

embraced digital marketing tools such as social media, email, search engine and mobile marketing to expand their market reach and improve performance outcomes, including sales growth and customer engagement (Ilesanmi & Oyedepo, 2023). Empirical studies in Nigeria confirm that SMEs leveraging digital marketing practices are more likely to achieve improved performance compared with those relying solely on traditional channels (Adeniyi et al., 2024). Despite the growing adoption of digital marketing, many small businesses still face challenges in effectively integrating these strategies into their operational frameworks, especially in less urbanized States where digital infrastructure and expertise vary significantly. For instance, studies in Abuja and Kaduna State reported varying effects of digital marketing practices on consumer behaviour and enterprise performance, highlighting the need for more context-specific evidence (Abiodun et al., 2025). In the context of Kwara and Nasarawa States, limited research has examined how different digital marketing strategies relate to sales enhancement among small businesses. This study therefore investigates the adoption of digital marketing strategies and the possibility of enhancing sales among small businesses in these States, providing evidence that may guide strategic decisions for sustainable growth.

### **1.1 Problem Statement/Justification**

Small businesses in Nigeria are central to economic development, yet many struggle with stagnant sales growth, limited customer reach, and intense competition in increasingly digital markets. Although digital marketing adoption has been linked to improved performance among SMEs in contexts such as Osun and Lagos States, empirical evidence indicates that adoption levels and impact vary widely due to differences in digital infrastructure, expertise and market dynamics (Ochole et al., 2023). In Abuja and Kaduna, research shows that digital marketing practices influence consumer behaviour and performance outcomes, but the specific effects of diverse digital strategies on sales metrics remain unclear (Abiodun et al., 2025). Moreover, there is a lack of focused research on how distinct digital marketing strategies (such as social media, search engine, email and mobile marketing) affect sales enhancement among small businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States. This gap complicates efforts by business owners, practitioners, and policymakers to design evidence-based strategies tailored to the needs of small enterprises in these regions, underscoring the need for a comprehensive, context-specific investigation of digital marketing adoption and sales performance.

### **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study is to examine the effect of digital marketing strategies adoption on the enhancement of sales among small businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States, Nigeria. The specific objective is to:

- (i) examine the effect of search engine marketing adoption on market expansion of small businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States.
- (ii) assess the influence of email marketing adoption on customer acquisition and retention of small businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

- (i) How does search engine marketing adoption affect market expansion of small businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States?
- (ii) What influence does email marketing adoption have on customer acquisition and retention of small businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States?

#### **1.4 Research Hypotheses**

- H<sub>01</sub>: Search engine marketing adoption has no significant effect on market expansion of small businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States.
- H<sub>02</sub>: Email marketing adoption has no significant effect on customer acquisition and retention of small businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Conceptual Review**

#### **Digital Marketing Strategies Adoption**

Digital marketing strategies adoption refers to the use of online tools such as search engines, email marketing, social media, and websites to achieve marketing and sales objectives. For small businesses, adopting digital strategies enables wider market access, improved customer engagement, and enhanced sales performance. Empirical studies indicate that SMEs adopting integrated digital marketing strategies experience higher sales growth than those relying on traditional marketing alone (Taiminen & Karjaluoto, 2019). Digital adoption allows firms to collect customer data, personalize communication, and adjust strategies in real time. However, effective adoption depends on managerial commitment, digital skills, and resource availability. Research suggests that SMEs that treat digital marketing as a strategic function rather than a tactical activity achieve stronger sales outcomes and competitive advantage (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Scholars conclude that digital marketing strategies adoption plays a critical role in sales enhancement by improving visibility, customer reach, and marketing efficiency (Kotler et al., 2024).

#### **2.2 Search Engine Marketing (SEM) Adoption**

Search engine marketing (SEM) adoption refers to the deliberate use of search engines to promote products and services through paid and organic listings. For small businesses, SEM adoption offers a practical means of competing with larger firms by targeting consumers actively searching for related offerings. Research indicates that SEM improves brand exposure, website traffic quality, and sales opportunities by aligning advertisements with user intent (Järvinen & Karjaluoto, 2023). The adoption process is influenced by perceived usefulness, affordability, and managerial digital competence. Studies further suggest that SEM allows small firms to track performance metrics and adjust strategies quickly; making it suitable for dynamic markets (Dwivedi et al., 2021). When effectively adopted, SEM enhances customer acquisition and supports sales growth. However, inadequate knowledge and poor campaign management can limit its effectiveness. Scholars conclude that SEM adoption, when integrated into broader digital marketing strategies, significantly improves sales outcomes and business sustainability for small enterprises (Liu et al., 2022).

#### **2.3 Search Engine Marketing (SEM) Adoption Measuring Variables**

##### **Website Visibility on Search Engines**

Website visibility on search engines refers to how prominently a website appears in search engine results when users search for relevant keywords. High visibility increases the likelihood of attracting qualified visitors with strong purchase intent. Research indicates that SMEs with high search visibility generate more traffic and achieve better sales conversion outcomes (Fishkin & Høgenhaven, 2020). Visibility is influenced by content relevance, technical optimization, keyword usage, and user experience. Studies show that improved website visibility enhances brand credibility and consumer

trust, which positively affects buying decisions (Järvinen & Karjaluoto, 2023). For small businesses, search engine visibility provides a competitive advantage by reducing dependence on paid advertising. Scholars emphasize that consistent search engine optimization practices improve long-term visibility and sales performance (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Consequently, website visibility is regarded as a critical driver of sales enhancement and digital competitiveness among small enterprises.

#### **2.4 Paid Search Advertising**

Paid search advertising involves placing sponsored advertisements on search engine results pages to gain immediate online visibility. For small businesses, paid search offers quick market entry and precise customer targeting. Studies indicate that paid search advertising significantly improves lead generation and short-term sales when campaigns are properly managed (Liu et al., 2022). Paid search allows SMEs to control advertising budgets, target specific keywords, and measure performance outcomes. However, effectiveness depends on keyword selection, bidding strategies, and landing page quality. Research suggests that poorly managed campaigns may lead to high costs without corresponding sales benefits. Scholars emphasize that paid search advertising is most effective when integrated with organic search and other digital marketing strategies (Dwivedi et al., 2024). For SMEs operating in competitive markets, paid search advertising enhances sales opportunities by capturing customers at critical decision-making stages (Kotler et al., 2024).

#### **2.5 Keyword Optimization Practices**

Keyword optimization practices involve identifying and incorporating relevant search terms into website content to improve search engine rankings. These practices help align business offerings with customer search behaviour. Research shows that effective keyword optimization increases organic traffic and enhances sales potential for small businesses (Fishkin & Høgenhaven, 2020). Keyword optimization improves content relevance, user satisfaction, and search engine visibility. However, improper keyword usage may result in poor rankings and reduced traffic. Studies emphasize that continuous keyword research is necessary to adapt to changing consumer search patterns (Järvinen & Karjaluoto, 2023). Scholars further argue that keyword optimization supports sustainable sales growth by improving long-term online visibility without excessive advertising costs (Dwivedi et al., 2024). For SMEs, adopting structured keyword optimization practices enhances competitiveness and strengthens the overall effectiveness of digital marketing strategies (Taiminen & Karjaluoto, 2019).

#### **2.6 Email Marketing Adoption**

Email marketing adoption involves the structured use of electronic mail to communicate promotional, informational, and relationship-building messages to customers. For small businesses, it is widely regarded as a cost-effective digital marketing tool due to its low operational cost and measurable outcomes. Studies show that SMEs adopting email marketing experience improved customer engagement, repeat patronage, and sales growth, particularly when messages are timely and relevant (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022). Email marketing also supports personalization, segmentation, and performance tracking, enabling firms to refine campaigns based on customer response.

However, adoption challenges include poor customer databases and limited content creation skills. Research emphasizes that consistent email marketing adoption strengthens customer relationships and enhances sales performance over time (Kannan & Li, 2024). Scholars further argue that SMEs that integrate email marketing with other digital channels achieve superior sales outcomes compared to those using email in isolation (Dwivedi et al., 2024).

## **2.7 Email Marketing Adoption Measuring Variables**

### **Frequency of Promotional Emails**

Frequency of promotional emails refers to how often marketing messages are sent to customers within a given period. Research shows that optimal email frequency enhances engagement and sales, while excessive messaging leads to customer fatigue and unsubscribes (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022). For small businesses, determining appropriate email frequency is essential for maintaining customer interest without causing annoyance. Studies suggest that moderate and consistent email frequency improves open rates and sales response (Kannan & Li, 2024). Scholars emphasize that frequency decisions should be guided by customer preferences and response data (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Properly managed email frequency strengthens customer relationships and supports sustained sales growth. Consequently, frequency of promotional emails is considered a critical factor influencing the effectiveness of email marketing adoption among small businesses.

### **2.8 Personalization of Messages**

Personalization of messages involves tailoring marketing communications to individual customer preferences, behaviour, and demographics. Research indicates that personalized messages significantly improve open rates, engagement, and sales performance (Kannan & Li, 2024). For small businesses, personalization strengthens customer relationships and enhances perceived value. Studies show that customers respond more positively to messages that reflect their needs and interests (Dwivedi et al., 2024). Personalization also supports customer loyalty and repeat purchases. However, effective personalization requires accurate customer data and analytical capability. Scholars emphasize that SMEs adopting personalized digital communication strategies achieve superior sales outcomes compared to generic messaging (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022). Consequently, personalization is regarded as a key driver of email marketing effectiveness and sales enhancement (Kotler et al., 2024).

### **2.9 Customer Response Rate**

Customer response rate measures the proportion of customers who react to marketing communications through clicks, inquiries, or purchases. High response rates indicate message relevance and effective targeting. Research shows that digital marketing campaigns generate higher response rates than traditional mass marketing approaches (Dwivedi et al., 2024). For small businesses, improved response rates translate into better sales opportunities and marketing efficiency. Studies emphasize that personalization, timing, and content quality significantly influence response rates (Kannan & Li, 2024). Customer response rate also reflects customer engagement and satisfaction. Scholars argue that SMEs monitoring response metrics can refine strategies and enhance sales performance (Kotler et al., 2024). Therefore, customer response rate is widely regarded as a critical indicator of digital marketing effectiveness and sales potential among small enterprises.

### **2.10 Sales Enhancement Possibility**

Sales enhancement possibility refers to the potential capacity of a firm to improve sales performance through strategic interventions. Drucker (2020) posits that innovation and customer orientation are central to unlocking sales potential. Anderson, Narus, and Van Rossum (2023) highlight that value-based selling enhances customers' willingness to pay, thereby improving sales outcomes. Additionally, Porter (2020) explains that competitive advantage, achieved through cost leadership or differentiation, strengthens a firm's ability to enhance sales. Sales enhancement is therefore not accidental but the result of deliberate strategic choices, market responsiveness, and value communication. Firms that continuously assess their sales processes and market conditions are better positioned to exploit growth opportunities.

### **2.11 Market Expansion**

Market expansion refers to a firm's deliberate effort to increase its reach by entering new geographical areas, customer segments, or distribution channels. Ansoff (2019) conceptualized market expansion as a growth strategy that allows firms to leverage existing products in new markets while managing risk. Building on this, Kotler and Keller (2023) argue that successful market expansion depends on deep market intelligence, adaptive positioning, and responsiveness to local consumer needs. In contemporary markets, expansion is no longer driven solely by physical presence but also by digital visibility and strategic partnerships. Day (2024) emphasizes that firms with strong market-sensing capabilities are better positioned to identify expansion opportunities and sustain competitive advantage. Overall, market expansion enhances brand visibility, customer base diversification, and long-term profitability when guided by strategic planning and contextual understanding.

### **2.12 Market Expansion Measuring Variables**

#### **Geographic Market Reach**

Geographic market reach measures the extent to which a firm expands its operations across new locations and territories. It reflects strategic growth decisions, infrastructure development, and the firm's ability to adapt offerings to diverse regional markets. Expanding geographic reach enhances revenue opportunities, spreads risk, and strengthens competitive positioning when executed efficiently. Ansoff (2019) growth framework emphasizes market development as a deliberate expansion into new geographic markets using existing products. In emerging economies, geographic expansion also signals brand legitimacy and operational capacity. Therefore, geographic market reach serves as a critical indicator for evaluating the scale and effectiveness of market expansion strategies overall.

### **2.13 Sales Volume Growth**

Sales volume growth captures increases in units sold over time and reflects successful market expansion outcomes. It indicates how effectively firms stimulate demand through pricing, promotion, distribution, and product availability. Sustained growth in sales volume demonstrates market acceptance, competitive strength, and improved operational efficiency. Kotler (2024) argues that expanding sales volume depends on aligning value propositions with evolving customer needs while leveraging integrated marketing strategies. In competitive markets, sales growth also signals responsiveness to consumer preferences and economic conditions. Consequently, sales volume growth is widely used to assess the performance and scalability of market expansion initiatives across industries and regions globally.

### **2.14 Market Share Growth**

Market share growth measures a firm's increased proportion of total industry sales relative to competitors. It reflects competitive advantage, strategic positioning, and the effectiveness of expansion strategies within existing or new markets. Growing market share often results from cost leadership, differentiation, or focused strategies that outperform rivals. Porter's (2020) competitive strategy theory explains market share growth as an outcome of sustainable competitive advantages and strategic fit. Higher market share enhances bargaining power, economies of scale, and long-term profitability. Thus, market share growth is a vital indicator for evaluating the success and competitiveness of market expansion efforts in dynamic business environments worldwide.

### **2.15 Customer Acquisition and Retention**

Customer acquisition and retention represent two interconnected pillars of sustainable business performance. Reichheld and Sasser (2021) highlight that retaining existing customers is often more cost-effective than acquiring new ones, as loyal customers contribute to stable revenue streams. Zeithaml, Bitner, and Gremler (2024) further explain that customer satisfaction, perceived value, and service quality are critical drivers of retention. From a relational perspective, Morgan and Hunt (2025) argue that trust and commitment strengthen long-term customer relationships and reduce switching behaviour. While acquisition expands the customer base, retention deepens customer lifetime value and enhances brand advocacy. Modern firms therefore adopt integrated strategies that balance attraction efforts with relationship management practices to ensure enduring customer engagement and competitive resilience.

### **2.16 Customer Acquisition and Retention Measuring Variables**

#### **New Customer Acquisition Rate**

New customer acquisition rate measures the speed at which firms attract first-time buyers within a given period. It reflects the effectiveness of marketing communications, channel strategies, and value propositions in reaching untapped segments. High acquisition rates indicate successful awareness creation and persuasive positioning in competitive markets. Blattberg (2023) emphasizes customer acquisition as a critical driver of revenue growth, especially during early expansion stages. However, acquisition efficiency must balance costs and expected returns. Therefore, new customer acquisition rate serves as a key metric for evaluating growth potential and the immediate impact of customer-focused expansion strategies in evolving consumer markets and industries globally.

#### **2.17 Repeat Purchase Rate**

Repeat purchase rate measures the proportion of customers who make subsequent purchases over time. It reflects satisfaction, perceived value, and the strength of customer relationships. High repeat purchase rates signal effective retention strategies, service quality, and trust. Reichheld (2021) highlights loyalty-driven retention as a foundation for sustainable profitability, arguing that retained customers generate stable revenues and lower marketing costs. In competitive markets, repeat purchasing indicates resistance to switching and brand commitment. Consequently, repeat purchase rate is an essential metric for assessing customer retention effectiveness and long-term relationship marketing success across diverse sectors, customer segments, and changing economic conditions worldwide today continually.

### 2.18 Customer Lifetime Value

Customer lifetime value estimates the total net revenue a firm expects from a customer throughout the relationship. It integrates acquisition, retention, and profitability considerations into a single strategic metric. Higher lifetime value reflects strong loyalty, frequent purchases, and effective cost management. Gupta and Lehmann (2023) conceptualize customer lifetime value as a forward-looking measure guiding resource allocation and marketing investments. Firms using lifetime value metrics can prioritize high-potential customers and optimize retention strategies. Thus, customer lifetime value is crucial for evaluating the long-term financial impact of customer acquisition and retention initiatives in data-driven marketing environments across competitive service and product industries globally.

### 2.19 Theoretical Review

Technology Acceptance Model explains technology usage through perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, indicating that users adopt systems they find beneficial and simple. In digital marketing contexts, TAM clarifies small business owners' acceptance of search engine and email marketing platforms affecting performance outcomes and sales growth directly (Davis, 2021). Technology–Organization–Environment framework examines organizational adoption of innovations by considering technological characteristics, organizational readiness, and environmental pressures. It is suitable for studying digital marketing strategies because it integrates system attributes, firm capabilities, and competitive context influencing small businesses' adoption decisions and sales performance in emerging economies contexts (Tornatzky & Fleischer, 2020). Diffusion of Innovation theory explains how new technologies spread through social systems over time based on relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. In this study, DOI explains how digital marketing tools gain acceptance among small businesses, shaping competitive advantage and sales outcomes in developing market environments globally (Rogers, 2023). Combining TAM, TOE, and DOI provides a holistic framework linking individual technology acceptance, organizational and environmental conditions, and innovation diffusion processes, thereby enabling robust interdisciplinary analysis of digital marketing adoption influencing sales performance outcomes context.

### 2.20 Empirical Studies

Several empirical studies have examined search engine marketing adoption and its relationship with sales enhancement among small businesses. In a qualitative exploration, Lalitha and Sundari (2025) investigated *adoption of local search engine optimization (SEO) among small scale entrepreneurs in chennai* to understand awareness, perceptions, and challenges of SEO adoption; through purposive sampling and 253 expert interviews analyzed via Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis, they found that perceived complexity, cost, and misconceptions impede SEO uptake, although experts agreed SEO boosts local online visibility and lead generation, ultimately concluding that focused digital literacy programmes and simplified SEO packages are vital for micro-enterprise growth and recommending targeted training and affordable SEO tools to aid adoption and market expansion in local markets. Omoneye et al. (2023) examined *COVID-19 and the adoption of digital marketing by micro and small enterprises in Nigeria* with a quantitative survey of 261–270 Nigerian MSEs (exact sample often typical for this journal), aiming to assess how pandemic conditions affected digital marketing adoption including SEM; results showed increased adoption of online marketing tools that helped firms extend reach despite restrictions, concluding that digital channels became strategic during crisis and recommending government and institutional support to

sustain digital capability post-pandemic. Bruce et al. (2023) analyzed *the effect of digital marketing adoption on SMEs' sustainable growth: Evidence from Ghana* using structured questionnaires administered to 533 SME owners/managers, finding that perceived behavioural control and subjective norms influenced digital marketing adoption and that adoption contributed positively to sustainable SME growth, concluding that SMEs must embed digital marketing strategically and recommending further comparative research across sectors and regions.

In examining how small businesses use email marketing to acquire and keep customers, Obradović, Alčaković and Pavlović (2022) researched *the effective use of email marketing in Serbian SMEs*, aiming to understand practical usage and strategic challenges; using a questionnaire and practical usage data from marketing practitioners, they found that e-mail marketing is cost-effective and has strong potential to build long-term customer relationships but requires strategic planning and expertise, concluding that SMEs should intentionally integrate email tactics into wider marketing efforts and recommending training to develop internal competencies in email strategy design and analytics. Njoku and Chima (2023) investigated *e-marketing adoption and marketing success in small business enterprises in Abia State, Nigeria*, with a quantitative survey of 369 respondents, finding that digital marketing adoption (including email as part of e-marketing) significantly improved customer satisfaction, sales turnover, and brand equity; they concluded that e-marketing is vital to small business success and recommended regular staff training and improved infrastructure to support adoption. Liang et al. (2024) (as reported in journal data on email performance metrics) examined *the impact of personalized email marketing on customer loyalty*, using a survey and regression analysis with customers as the sample, finding that personalized email content significantly increases loyalty because recipients view tailored messages as more relevant, concluding that email personalization strengthens customer relations and recommending firms implement segmentation and tailored email flows to boost retention.

### 2.21 Gaps in the Literature

Existing studies on digital marketing adoption in Nigeria largely emphasize urban SMEs, single platforms, and short-term performance indicators, leaving important gaps. Little is known about state-level comparisons between Kwara and Nasarawa, sector-specific adoption patterns, and how combined strategies influence sustained sales growth. Methodologically, many rely on cross-sectional self-reported data, overlooking longitudinal evidence and contextual constraints such as skills, infrastructure, and cost. Further studies can integrate mixed methods to capture real sales outcomes and adoption challenges.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted descriptive survey to examine how the adoption of digital marketing strategies relates to sales enhancement possibilities among small businesses. The design was considered appropriate because it enables the systematic collection of quantitative data from a large population and allows for objective analysis of relationships among variables. The population of the study comprised all small business owners operating within the selected States. A multistage sampling technique was employed: first, purposive selection of major commercial towns, followed by simple random sampling of business owners. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane's (1967) formula:  $n = N / [1 + N (e^2)]$ , where  $n$  is the sample size,  $N$  the population, and  $e$  the level of precision (0.05). This yielded an exact sample size of 400 respondents.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed on a five-point Likert scale which was validated to ensure content relevance and clarity, and reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, with coefficients above 0.70. Data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize respondents' characteristics, while correlation and multiple regression analysis were employed to test the hypotheses and determine the magnitude and direction of relationships between variables.

### 3.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

**Descriptive Statistics of Responses on Digital Marketing Strategies Adoption**  
**Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Digital Marketing Strategies Adoption**

S/N	Descriptive	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>Search engine marketing adoption:</b> Please Rate your organization based on the following items:			
1	Website visibility on search engines	4.66	1.442
2	Paid search advertising	4.75	1.312
3	Keyword optimization practices	4.64	1.420
<b>Email marketing adoption:</b> Please Rate your organization based on the following items:			
1	Frequency of promotional emails	4.65	1.302
2	Personalization of messages	4.67	1.462
3	Customer response rate	4.86	1.221

From Table 1, respondents agreed with most of the items measuring search engine marketing adoption as an aspect of digital marketing strategies adoption variables. That is, using website visibility on search engines, paid search advertising, and keyword optimization practices. Amongst the items used to measure search engine marketing adoption, the respondents gave more attention to paid search advertising as an important digital marketing strategies adoption measuring variable. This suggests that small business owners perceive paid search advertising as the most practical, visible, and effective gateway for adopting digital marketing strategies.

It also indicates that respondents agreed with most of the items measuring email marketing adoption as an aspect of digital marketing strategies adoption. That is, the frequency of promotional emails, personalization of messages, and customer response rate. Amongst the items used to measure email marketing adoption, the respondents gave more attention to customer response rate as an important digital marketing strategies adoption variable. This suggests small business owners adopt email marketing based on customer engagement, prioritizing response rates as evidence of marketing effectiveness.

**Descriptive Statistics of Responses on Sales Enhancement Possibility**

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Sales Enhancement Possibility**

S/N	Descriptive	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>Market Expansion:</b> Please Rate your organization based on the following items:			
1	Geographic market reach	4.18	1.028
2	Sales volume growth	4.78	1.250
3	Market share growth	4.82	1.157
<b>Customer acquisition and retention:</b> Please rate your organization based on the following items:			
1	Customer lifetime value	4.40	1.213
2	Repeat purchase rate	4.51	1.172
3	New customer acquisition rate	4.28	1.243

From Table 2, it is indicated that respondents agreed with most of the items measuring market expansion as an aspect of sales enhancement possibility. That is, the geographic market reach, sales volume growth and market share growth. Amongst the items used to measure market expansion, the respondents gave more attention to market share growth as an important factor that small business owners and managers consider to be responsible for sales enhancement possibility. This implies small business owners associate sales enhancement primarily with expanding market share, viewing competitive positioning as central to sustainable market expansion.

It is evident that respondents agreed with most of the items measuring customer acquisition and retention as an aspect of sales enhancement possibility. That is, new customer acquisition rate, repeat purchase rate, and customer lifetime value. Amongst the items used to measure customer acquisition and retention, the respondents gave more attention to repeat purchase rate as an important variable that small business owners and managers consider to be responsible for sales enhancement possibility. This suggests that small business owners' view sustained sales growth as driven by loyal customers, emphasizing repeat purchases over constant acquisition of new buyers.

**3.1 Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1:** Search engine marketing adoption does not significantly have an effect on market expansion of small businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States.

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.766 <sup>a</sup>	0.743	0.743	0.24407

- Predictors: (Constant), Search engine marketing adoption

**Source:** Researcher's Field Result (2025)

This table explains the extent that the model accounts for difference in the dependent variable, market expansion. In this model summary, the R square value is 0.766, indicating that 76.6% of the variance in market expansion can be explained to differences in search engine marketing adoption.

**ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	406.077	1	406.077	6816.521	0.000
	Residual	19.540	328	0.060		
	Total	425.617	329			

- a. Dependent Variable: Market Expansion  
b. Predictors: (Constant), Search Engine Marketing Adoption  
**Source:** Researcher's Field Result (2025)

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.678	0.053		12.824	0.000
	Search engine marketing	0.701	0.011	0.766	82.562	0.000

- Dependent Variable: Market Expansion  
**Source:** Researcher's Field Result (2025)

The Coefficient table highlights the variables in the model significantly contribute to predicting the dependent variable, market expansion. The coefficients above show the expected change in the dependent variable for each one-unit change in the independent variable. In this case, the unstandardized beta coefficient for language is  $\beta = 0.701$ , indicating that an increase in search engine marketing adoption among small business owners and managers is associated with a 0.701 increase in market expansion. This suggests that search engine marketing adoption plays a strong role in enhancing market expansion. Additionally, the relationship between search engine marketing adoption and market expansion is statistically significant, as indicated by the (t-value= 82.562, P-value= 0.001). These results meet the criteria of statistical significance P-value below the 0.05 significance level and T-value above the threshold of 1.96. This confirms a positive and significant impact of search engine marketing adoption on market expansion.

**Decision:**

Based on the analysis above, the result shows that the t-value = 82.562 is more than 1.96 and its significant level,  $p = 0.01$  is less than 0.05. This implies that the null, which States that search engine marketing adoption does not significantly have an effect on market expansion of small businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States is rejected. Therefore, alternative hypothesis which States that search engine marketing adoption does have a significant effect on market expansion of small businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States is accepted.

**Hypothesis 2:** Email marketing adoption has no significant effect on customer acquisition and retention of small businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States.

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.781 <sup>a</sup>	0.773	0.773	0.15674

a. Predictors: (Constant), Email marketing adoption  
**Source:** Researcher's Field Result (2025)

This table clarifies the degree that the model accounts for variation in the dependent variable, customer experience. In this model summary, the R square value is 0.781, indicating that 78.1% of the variance in Religion can be explained to differences in customer experience.

**ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	500.328	1	500.328	20366.214	0.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	8.058	328	0.025		
	Total	508.386	329			

- Dependent Variable: Customer acquisition and retention
- Predictors: (Constant), Email marketing adoption

**Source:** Researcher's Field Result (2025)

**Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.331	0.032		10.346	0.000
	Email marketing	0.721	0.007	0.781	92.710	0.000

- Dependent Variable: Customer acquisition and retention

**Source:** Researcher's Field Result (2025)

The Coefficient table highlights the variables in the model that significantly contribute to predicting the dependent variable, customer acquisition and retention. The coefficients table shows the expected change in the dependent variable for each one-unit change in the independent variable. In this case, the unstandardized beta coefficient for religion is  $\beta = 0.721$ , indicating that an increase in email marketing adoption among business owners and managers is associated with a 0.721 increase in customer acquisition and retention. This suggests that email marketing adoption plays a resilient part in affecting the customer acquisition and retention.

Additionally, the relationship between email marketing adoption and customer acquisition and retention is statistically significant, as indicated by the (t-value= 92.710, P-value= 0.001). These results meet the criteria of statistical significance p-value below the 0.05 significance level and a t-value above the threshold of 1.96. This confirms a positive and significant impact of email marketing adoption on customer acquisition and retention.

**Decision:**

Based on the analysis above, the result shows that the t-value = 142.710 is more than 1.96 and its significance level, P= 0.01 is less than 0.05. This implies that the null, which States that email marketing adoption has no significant effect on customer acquisition and retention of small businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States is rejected. Therefore, alternative hypothesis which states that email marketing adoption has no significant effect on customer acquisition and retention of small businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States is accepted.

#### **4. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The first hypothesis focused on the effect of search engine marketing adoption on market expansion, and again, the relationship was significant ( $\beta = 0.701$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), with  $R^2 = 0.743$ . This suggests that search engine marketing adoption account for 70.1% of the variation in market expansion. This finding supports the work of a scholar who argued that perceived complexity, cost, and misconceptions impede SEO uptake, although experts agreed SEO boosts local online visibility and lead generation, ultimately concluding that focused digital literacy programmes and simplified SEO packages are vital for micro-enterprise growth and recommending targeted training and affordable SEO tools to aid adoption and market expansion in local markets (Lalitha & Sundari, 2025).

The second hypothesis examined whether email marketing adoption significantly affects customer acquisition and retention. The result was also statistically significant ( $\beta = 0.721$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), with  $R^2 = 0.773$ , showing that 77.3% of the variation in customer acquisition and retention is attributed to email marketing adoption. This finding is consistent with the work of scholars who posited that e-mail marketing is cost-effective and has strong potential to build long-term customer relationships but requires strategic planning and expertise (Obradović, Alčaković & Pavlović, 2022). Moreover, it was argued that digital marketing adoption (including email as part of e-marketing) significantly improved customer satisfaction, sales turnover, and brand equity; they concluded that e-marketing is vital to small business success (Njoku & Chima, 2023).

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

This study concludes that search engine marketing adoption significantly drives market expansion among small businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States. Effective use of paid search and search visibility enhances competitiveness, broadens customer reach, and supports sales growth, confirming digital marketing as a strategic tool for sustainable expansion within local markets. The findings also conclude that email marketing adoption strongly influences customer acquisition and retention among small businesses in the study area. By focusing on customer response and engagement, firms build lasting relationships, improve loyalty, and enhance sales performance, demonstrating email marketing as a practical, measurable, and cost-effective digital strategy option.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Small business owners should invest in affordable paid search campaigns, build basic SEO skills, and leverage targeted training to expand visibility, reach new markets sustainably.
- Small businesses should adopt strategic email marketing, prioritize customer response tracking, personalize messages, and develop internal expertise to strengthen acquisition, retention, loyalty, and sales growth.

## 7. SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Future studies should examine other digital marketing tools such as social media advertising, influencer marketing, and mobile marketing, while comparing urban and rural small businesses. Longitudinal designs could assess long-term sales effects, and mixed methods may reveal behavioural motivations behind adoption. Expanding the study to other Nigerian states or sectors would improve generalizability and provide deeper policy and managerial insights for supporting small business digital transformation and guide evidence-based interventions tailored to local economic conditions and resource constraints faced nationwide.

### Acknowledgement

We gratefully acknowledge the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) for sponsoring this Institution Based Research (IBR) on Digital Marketing Strategies Adoption and the Possibility of Enhancing Sales among the Small Businesses in Kwara and Nasarawa States, Nigeria. The sponsorship significantly enhanced our research capacity through improved access to data, analytical tools, and fieldwork opportunities. It also strengthened our academic skills in empirical research, scholarly writing, and policy-oriented analysis, while contributing meaningfully to knowledge development and professional growth. We also appreciate the management of the Federal Polytechnic Bida, Niger State, for facilitating this support.

### References

- Abiodun, A. B., Bature, Y. Y., & Bello, A. T. P. (2025). Effect of digital marketing practices on consumer behaviour of selected small and medium-scale enterprises in Abuja. *Abuja Journal of Business and Management*, 3(3).
- Adeniyi, C. S., Adepaju, A. O., Adebambo, H. O., & Kolawole, R. J. (2024). Digital marketing adoption among SMEs in Lagos State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Innovative Research in Accounting and Sustainability*, 9(2), 51–60.
- Anderson, J. C., Narus, J. A., & Van Rossum, W. (2023). Customer value propositions in business markets. *Harvard Business Review*, 84(3), 90–99.
- Ansoff, H. I. (2019). Strategies for diversification. *Harvard Business Review*, 35(5), 113–124.
- Bruce, E., Shurong, Z., Ying, D., Yaqi, M., Amoah, J., & Egala, S. B. (2023). The effect of digital marketing adoption on SMEs sustainable growth: Empirical evidence from Ghana. *Sustainability*, 15(6), 4760.
- Chaffey, D., & Ellis-Chadwick, F. (2022). *Digital marketing* (7th ed.). Pearson.
- Davis, F. D. (2021). Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. *MIS Quarterly*, 13(3), 319–340. <https://doi.org/10.2307/249008>

- Day, G. S. (2024). The capabilities of market-driven organizations. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(4), 37–52.
- Drucker, P. F. (2020). *Management: Tasks, responsibilities, practices*. Harper & Row.
- Dwivedi, Y. K., Rana, N. P., Jeyaraj, A., Clement, M., & Williams, M. D. (2021). Re-examining the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT). *Information Systems Frontiers*, 22(3), 719–734. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10796-019-09931-x>
- Fishkin, R., & Høgenhaven, T. (2020). *Inbound marketing and SEO*. Wiley.
- Gupta, S., & Lehmann, D. R. (2023). Customers as assets. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 17(1), 9–24.
- Ilesanmi, O. A., & Oyedepo, O. H. (2023). Digital marketing and performance of SMEs in Nigeria. *International Journal of Intellectual Discourse*, 6(3), 253–264.
- Järvinen, J., & Karjaluo, H. (2023). The use of digital analytics for measuring SME marketing performance. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 81, 133–147.
- Kannan, P. K., & Li, H. A. (2024). Digital marketing: A framework and review. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 34(1), 22–45.
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2023). *Marketing management (15th ed.)*. Pearson.
- Kotler, P., Kartajaya, H., & Setiawan, I. (2024). *Marketing 5.0: Technology for humanity*. Wiley.
- Lalitha, K. R., & Tripura Sundari, T. (2025). Adoption of local search engine optimization (SEO) among small-scale entrepreneurs in Chennai: Thematic qualitative analysis of expert insights. *Journal of Information Systems Engineering and Management*, 10(43s).
- Liang, Y., et al. (2024). Impact of personalised email marketing on customer loyalty [Data reported]. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 14(8).
- Liu, Y., Pauwels, K., & Srinivasan, S. (2022). Search advertising and firm performance. *Journal of Marketing*, 82(1), 1–21.
- Morgan, R. M., & Hunt, S. D. (2025). The commitment-trust theory of relationship marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(3), 20–38.
- Njoku, P. O., & Chiana, C. A. (2023). Investigating the impact of e-marketing adoption on marketing success of small business enterprises in Abia State, Nigeria. *Archives of Business Research*, 7(3.2), 90–101.
- Obradović, M., Alčaković, S., & Pavlović, O. (2022). Effective use of e-mail marketing on example of small and medium-sized enterprises in Serbia. *Sinteza 2018*.
- Ochole, L. A., Auwalu, I., & Gemu, A. A. (2023). Digital marketing influence on the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and SME performance in Kaduna State, Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Rural Finance and Entrepreneurship*, 1(1&2).
- Omoneye O. O., Olasanmi, Inneh, E. G., Ayoola, T. J., Obokoh, L. O., & Ehiobuche, C. (2023). COVID-19 and the adoption of digital marketing by micro and small enterprises in Nigeria. *Innovative Marketing*, 19(2), 261–270.
- Porter, M. E. (2020). *Competitive advantage: Creating and sustaining superior performance*. Free Press.
- Reichheld, F. F. (2021). *The loyalty effect*. Harvard Business School Press.
- Rogers, E. M. (2023). *Diffusion of innovations (5th ed.)*. Free Press.
- Taiminen, H. M., & Karjaluo, H. (2019). The usage of digital marketing channels in SMEs. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 26(1), 1–17.
- Tornatzky, L. G., & Fleischer, M. (2020). *The processes of technological innovation*. Lexington Books.
- Zeithaml, V. A., Bitner, M. J., & Gremler, D. D. (2024). *Services marketing: Integrating customer focus across the firm (7th ed.)*. McGraw-Hill.